The
COMMONWEAL

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The Rôle of Anti-Semitism in Poland

WE MUST SAY, at the outset, that we genuinely regret one section of Cardinal Hlond's recent statement regarding the pogrom in Kielce. We regret it for two reasons: first that it continues a Polish tradition of tragic implications and second that it plays directly into the hands of Moscow's Polish policy. And we further regret that the American Catholic press in general has rallied to its defense.

The whole question cannot be understood by the ordinary American without some reference to the history of anti-Semitism in Poland, and to the underlying attitudes of Polish nationalism. We should recall that the middle class in Poland was almost entirely Jewish and German. We must also bear in mind that before the first World War the Czarist Government used anti-Semitism as a means to deflect Poles from centering their political efforts upon the achievement of independence. (There is reason to suspect the present-day Kremlin of somewhat similar designs.) The Jews were built up as a substitute object of hatred in order to weaken the loyalty of Poles to their legitimate political aspirations. When Poland gained her independence after the last war, there were two schools of thought regarding the various minorities included within her frontiers. One school, represented by Pilsudski, and probably representing the views of the then majority of Poles, might be described as federalist; i.e., anyone residing within the boundaries of Poland and loyal to the Polish State was a Polish citizen, regardless of the language he spoke, the religion he practiced, or his ultimate geographical origin. This school of thought succeeded in embodying its views in the various Polish Constitutions. It was opposed by the nationalists in the strict sense, who regarded only those who spoke Polish and belonged to the Latin Rite as being true citizens of Poland—all others, Greek Rite Catholics, Orthodox, Germans and Jews, being at best second class citizens. Many of these nationalists even went so far as to believe that the only solution of the Jewish question was forced emigration.

As long as Pilsudski lived, anti-Semitism was to a large extent held in check, but his successors in the dictatorial régime he founded took up the strict nationalist line and began once more to use anti-Semitism as a political device. In their case their object was to deflect attention from their own economic blunders by making the Jews into an economic scapegoat. Their policy took the form of a taxation designed to fall most heavily upon the Jewish community and of organized economic boycotting of Jewish business, as well as the virtual exclusion of Jews from public office —an exclusion which now gives peculiarly high visibility to what few Jews are officials of the present régime. Regretfully it must be said that Cardinal Hlond publicly advocated the boycott policy, just as in his recent statement he makes the same distinction between Pole and Jew as in the strict nationalist position. In this he was opposed by the great Bishop Szeptycki of Lwow.

It is doubtless true, as Cardinal Hlond says, that under the German occupation Poles and Jews made common cause against a common enemy; Polish nationalists have always welcomed Jews as their comrades in arms whenever any fighting was to be done. But that after the systematic nazi extermination of substantially the whole Jewish community in Poland, the pitiful remnant should continue to be subject to persecution is a terrible reminder of human depravity. Cardinal Hlond's expressed repugnance to it does him credit; it is only sad that he should continue to make a civic distinction between Jews and Poles and doubly sad that he should supply Moscow with precisely the ammunition it wants by in any way identifying the Jews of Poland, as a body, with the present Polish régime.

Crime Waves and Scapegoats

IT FEELS disconcertingly "conditioned," like one of Dr. Pavlov's dogs drooling when the bell sounds, to talk or write now about the current "Post War Crime Wave." Men's actions, viewed broadly, unsentimentally and statistically, are clearly influenced to a terrible degree by the course of external events, even though the individual

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person continues to have freedom to choose a better as well as a worse action, or at least reaction. For one reason and another, after this war just as they say after other wars, too many people too often in too many places are, under the stimulus of how things are, committing crimes.

Restricting alarm to the forty-eight states, it is still seen that nearly every Federal Reserve District has its own various locally emphasized crime to pad the front pages of the papers. There is no clear over-all pattern covering the country. But it is bad to notice that the recent crimes with the greatest impact have had racial coloration.

Isaac Woodward, the veteran in South Carolina, had his eyes gouged out and has failed to receive redress or pension. In Georgia the two young Negro couples were shot down dead with a chilling absence of motive. Negroes have been victims more than their relative number would make impartial, and Negroes have been feared or accused of crimes likewise out of proportion to their bulk in the population. A minority and recognizable group is once again beginning to serve as scapegoat.

There is absolutely no doubt in the world that neither Negroes nor any other racial or religious minority in America is disproportionately responsible for the problems and ill adjustments and nervousness which stimulate the crime wave. The unsettling forces are enormous and general and caused by long series of choices made in the past and being made currently; both private and public choices. In public actions which have tended to demoralize us all, the Negroes and other minorities obviously share less responsibility than the dominant groups. It is childish, undignified and unwholesomely mean to push the blame on the colored groups and to pretend to fool oneself that afflicting them, or failing to befriend and protect them, is by and large innocently visiting them with just retribution.

It is vain to try to write about the particular motivation of an individual who succumbs and commits a crime. The general, public maladies that lead, or tempt, to crime are everybody's fault to the degree that each could, with justly demanded effort, work against the general, demoralizing conditions. Americans know pretty well what is upsetting these days: the miseries of veterans' reconversion, the glare of the atom bomb, the worry over inflation-deflation, strikes and the threat of strikes, the shadow of the Russian communist bear, the ugliness of cities, the vacuity of the country, the desperation of finding work that is just and fills the longing for creation, the drying up of Faith in purpose and meaning, even the perverse synthetic obligation increasing numbers feel to be discontented. Releasing emotions against a scapegoat does not work against conditions like these.

Confusion over Bolivia

IT SEEMS likely that once again American public opinion has been poorly served by the American press with regard to events in a Latin American country. When in December, 1943, the Bolivian Government which had previously been in power was overthrown by a group of which Gualberto Villaroel was the leader, not only the American press but the State Department indicated that this new régime was of foreign inspiration (linked to Perón in Argentina) and of nazi complexion. How much truth there was in these allegations it is almost impossible for anyone to say, yet it seems not unlikely that they constituted a part of a deliberate campaign against Villarroel inspired by the opposition of his Government to the dominant economic interest in Bolivia—the owners of the tin mines. For the simple fact remains that the Villarroel Government is the first government in recent Bolivian history not controlled by these mine owners.

It would be foolish to contend that the Villarroel Government was democratic in any genuine sense. It may possibly have been linked to Perón because—whether we like it or not—both régimes were fighting a similar battle, the battle against the established and traditionally dominant economic groups in their respective countries. But one thing at least must be said in all justice, which is that under Villarroel the tin miners' unions were able to function without threat of massacre. And it must further be said that the knights of "democracy" who have now succeeded in overthrowing that government are strangely linked to the tin combine. Indeed recent happenings in Bolivia might be described as a successful application of the Browder alliance between really big industry and communism, since the PIR is of distinctly communist complexion and was supported in the revolution by the labor unions linked to Toledano (President of the CTAL) and not by the tin miners' unions. The second term in the equation is all too clearly indicated by the fact that the Secretary General of the now-ruling Junta is a certain Señor Roberto Bilbao, who was formerly Secretary of the National Mine Owners Association of Bolivia and who represented the Patiño interests in Bolivia's Central Bank, as well as by the fact that the confidential agent for the Patiño interests in Washington, Señor Raoul Diez de Medina, has now been appointed *Chargé d'Affaires* in the Bolivian Legation.

One may thus be forgiven if one remains a trifle dubious over the paeans of joy rung out by the American liberal press at the success of the latest South American uprising. The régime it overthrew was certainly no rose, but there is little reason to believe that the new régime will exhale a very much sweeter perfume.

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Our Policy in China

IT IS NOT hard to think of superficial reasons for accepting Mme. Sun's plea for suspending aid to Chiang kai-shek's government at its face value. After what they have suffered during the past ten years at the hands of foreigners, the Chinese people have a right to be left alone. Her term, "reactionary," has been bandied about so much as to have little real meaning nowadays, but the dictatorial character of the Chiang régime is unmistakable. Even more heinous is the corruption which attaches itself to Chiang's associates—a situation which fell so out of hand that millions starved while relief shipments found their way into the black market or rotted in the warehouses of Shanghai. There is plenty about the Kuomintang which is deplorable.

But how does it fit into the larger Far Eastern picture? Are Mme. Sun and the fifty-six Chinese educators, professional men, liberals etc. right in their basic contention that American aid to the Central Government is detrimental to the Chinese cause?

China's need of economic rehabilitation—even as a prelude to political reforms—is undeniable. A goodly portion of that vast nation's natural riches and industrial potential is centered in Manchuria, her principal bone of contention with Japan. Not only was China robbed of major fruits of victory by the Russian concessions in Manchuria granted at Yalta by the Americans and the British, but the Russians held on to that whole territory many months beyond the date of departure they had agreed to, systematically stripping the region to the bone. Meanwhile they gave the Chinese Communists such a hold over the looted region that the Central Government forces have as yet been able to penetrate only to a few parts of central and southern Manchuria.

And in general the Chinese Communists have for their part so disrupted communications and the like as to make economic rehabilitation quite impossible. They hold strategic sections of key railroad lines, block land communication between central and northern China, stimulate inflation by printing their own currency and prevent the grain and coal from the areas they control from reaching the areas where it is so vitally needed.

What of the American record in China? It has consistently been all too slight. Throughout the war, despite China's desperate need, she received only $600,000,000 worth of lend lease supplies. American military missions trained two bodies of Chinese troops, one in India, the other deep in the Chinese interior. For months now General Marshall has been seeking the amalgamation of all Chinese forces (including the Communists) and the reduction of the millions still in the field to an effective army of 600,000 men. This not only in the interest of China's national self-defense, but that vast numbers may lay down their arms and turn to peacetime industry and reconstruction. In contrast with the Russian and Chinese Communist policies in Manchuria and other areas under their control the United States has held to its tradition of the Open Door.

Now as to the immediate objectives of Generalissimo Chiang, as far as can be gathered from various foreign correspondents. He does not want for his ravaged land an all-out civil war. He is willing to concede to his Communist rivals certain sections of Manchuria and some isolated pockets elsewhere. But he will not go further. He will make the most of American-trained troops, equipment, munitions to clean out certain strategic pockets which ruinously break up the country and prevent the restoration of production and trade. At the same time he manifests little inclination to throw out the rascals who have been enriching themselves at the expense of the desperate Chinese people. Nor does he indicate any immediate intentions of embarking upon badly needed political reforms, let alone of transforming the Chinese government into anything approaching the democratic forms which Americans prescribe so universally—exact in every detail.

It is time to come to cases. The misleading character of Mme. Sun's appeal to the American people is even more obvious from the national interests involved than from the respective records of the main participants. Russia (and her Chinese comrades) wants a China divided, unstable, weak, subservient to her powerful neighbor. The United States wants a united China, with a stable government, strong economically and politically and able to assume an independent rôle in world affairs. Soviet Russia has been intervening too much in Chinese affairs; from the Manchuria incident onward the United States has concerned herself with China far too little. If we were to withdraw now the few thousand troops and marines we have in Chinese areas, if we should withhold military supplies, withdraw military advisers and the like, we should compound our past neglect and the concessions forced upon China at Yalta, and we should leave the Chinese people prey to a civil war which would render them more helpless and wretched than ever. And it would be folly for us to insist on Kuomintang-Communist coalition government. The interests of the Chinese people and the cause of peace now depend upon the establishment of an effective central authority under Chiang kai-shek. In strongly supporting the lesser of two evils the United States will have a real opportunity to press simultaneously for socio-political reforms. That is the only way we shall have that opportunity.

EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

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The Quebec Problem

What it is in Canada and its impact on the United States*

Mason Wade

THE TRAGEDY of the Province of Quebec today is that its desire to be left to itself is probably stronger than ever before, at a time when it is becoming impossible for any portion of the world to go its own way regardless of the rest of mankind. During the Second World War a greater and more closely integrated Canada grew up. Though Quebec is not the only section which wants the provinces to regain their powerful prewar status at the expense of a strong federal government, a larger proportion of its people than in any other province want to go back to the prewar world which will never exist again. Perhaps as a heritage from its opposition to the benevolent despotism of the French régime, but more probably because it wants to settle its own problems in its own way, Quebec is opposed to the expansion of the rôle of the State in society, particularly when "the State" means the predominantly English federal government rather than the predominantly French provincial government. Confronted with social problems whose seriousness is perhaps greater than elsewhere in Canada, Quebec is willing to accept federal financial aid in meeting them, but reluctant to resign control over measures designed to solve them.

An example of the conflict between Quebec's social needs and its opposition to *étatism* in general and federal intervention in social matters in particular, was provided by the controversy over family allowances. While this measure was opposed in English-Canadian quarters as an electoral bribe to Quebec which would saddle Canada with the support of Quebec's large families, French-Canadian spokesmen attacked it because it did not fully meet Quebec's social needs, and because the payments were to be made to mothers rather than fathers, contrary to the male-centered French-Canadian scheme of things.

Similar federal social legislation, which has been proposed, will encounter similar difficulties, for the traditions and structure of Quebec society differ from those of the other provinces. As a result of its reaction to wartime developments, Quebec has a tendency to go right or to the right of center, while the general Canadian tendency is leftward to a greater or lesser degree. While the Liberal federal government has borrowed many mildly socialistic planks from the CCF platform for its own purposes, Quebec has a holy horror of "socialism," whose "Latin" form has been condemned by the Church. It may take Quebec as long to clarify the semantic confusion over "socialism" as that over "liberalism" in the last century.

Quebec's economic readjustment to the postwar world offers a particularly difficult and delicate problem, with management and labor largely divided by the ethnic and cultural line, and many industries which were wartime creations for wartime purposes only. If postwar depression and widespread unemployment should develop, there would be great likelihood of a repetition on a larger scale of the social troubles of the 1930's, because of the greater disorganization of Quebec society. A new colonization movement, the chief solution favored by the provincial and clerical authorities for this prospective problem, is not apt to provide a satisfactory answer; for once a rural population is urbanized and industrialized it cannot be led back to the land. The application of this sociological truism to Quebec was made evident by the expensive failure of the colonization effort to solve the unemployment problem during the 1929-39 depression. French Canada has few pragmatic-minded economists of nationalist bent; Esdras Minville, the ablest and most articulate of them, favors a policy of decentralization of industry from its present concentration in the Greater Montreal area, and the integration of industry on a part-time basis into the traditional regional economies dominated by lumbering, agriculture, and the fisheries. So far this policy has gained no great measure of official support, despite Minville's demonstration of its effectiveness in the Gaspé fishing village from which he comes. Here, at Grande Vallée, a community which was once wholly dependent upon the fisheries now supplements its former marginal economy with subsistence agriculture and lumbering, and boasts a prosperity rare in underprivileged Gaspé. Crops are planted in the spring; then attention is turned to fishing during the early summer run of cod and mackerel; harvesting occupies the autumn; and the long Gaspé winter is

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devoted to forest industry. The seasonal and often permanent migration of the Gaspé population, which has long abandoned home for the New Brunswick and Maine lumber camps and unskilled or domestic labor in Quebec and Montreal during the off-season for fishing, has thus been checked in this community, with obvious social advantages. But the general establishment of a decentralized and diversified economy would be an uphill task, for Quebec is closely integrated with the continental economy, which has shown few signs of departure from its established pattern of concentrated mass production, regardless of the social ills arising from this policy under the customary business cycle of boom and depression.

The rapid rise of the international unions and the decline of French-Canadian isolation during the war raises other economic problems, for the effect of these developments has been to make the Quebec worker less willing to accept lower wages, poorer working conditions, and longer hours than those of his English-Canadian or American fellows. Yet much of Quebec's older industry is of a marginal nature, which was founded to take advantage of these conditions and whose management is convinced that it cannot survive without them. The future prospects for such industries under "foreign" control look dark; those under French-Canadian management, closer to the situation and mood of labor and enjoying the advantage of traditional national solidarity at whatever cost, have a better outlook. But the day of commercial exploitation of Quebec under the principle of as much as possible for master-race management and as little as possible for subject-people labor has passed; some of the largest and most successful industries have reversed the old labor policies and nonetheless piled up profits. The division of the labor movement itself and the conflict between the federal labor authorities, who favor the internationals, and the provincial ones, who favor the syndicates, have provided a temporary advantage for "foreign" management, which tends to use the weaker syndicates as company unions while thus acquiring the reputation of being sympathetic to French-Canadian ideas. But because of the strength of French-Canadian national solidarity and because of the growing accumulation of capital and know-how in French-Canadian hands, it seems likely that in the future the French-Canadian industrialist will play an ever greater rôle in Quebec's economy. This development will do much to eliminate one cause of ethnic friction, for all the ills of the industrial system will no longer be assigned by the ultra-nationalists to ethnic hatred.

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Any insight into the present and future of Quebec is dependent upon an understanding of the structure of French-Canadian society, which varies notably from the North American norm. It may well be compared to an iceberg. The one-ninth that is above water, the elite of priests, lawyers, doctors, scholars, and other highly educated men, includes some of the most cultivated and charming human beings on this continent. Most of its members are the equals and some the superiors of the best that English-speaking North America produces. The humanistic discipline of the classical college has preserved them from the narrow and limited outlook increasingly characteristic of the products of English-speaking educational systems as premature specialization and overemphasis on technical studies have become more and more dominant. Perfectly bilingual, at home with the cultural heritages of France, Britain, and the United States, and adding Gallic gaity and wit to the North American mixture of traits, the best of this elite is a leavening element in Canada, and can be one throughout North America if it develops a broader outlook and continues to strengthen its technical training. But the submerged eight-ninths of the social iceberg, the great mass of the French-Canadians, are underprivileged economically and intellectually.

The movement to the cities has created new French-Canadian appetites, and among them is one for a standard of living equal to that of the rest of North America. Another is for fuller educational opportunities. In the past, with the exception of the children of the elite and some promising youngsters whose education was underwritten by their curés in the hope that they would enter the priesthood, most French-Canadian youth lacked the opportunity to acquire education beyond the primary level. This level was in itself low, because of the prevailing view among the people that education beyond the merest rudiments was something of which their children had no need unless they were destined for professional careers. Compulsory education for all until the age of fourteen was only recently ordained; in the past, boys, particularly in the rural districts, tended to leave school at ten or twelve to work on the family farm or in factories. Girls generally stayed at school longer; and since the standards of the convents were higher than those of the boys' schools, the women of the underprivileged class are apt to be better educated than the men.

This situation long survived in French Canada because there has never been a great middle class with its typical concern for educational opportunities for all—the class which is the real strength of a democracy and predominant in English Canada, the United States, and Great Britain. Since the middle of the last century the French-Canadian elite has become more bourgeois-minded, but its social outlook is still reminiscent

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of that of the seigneurs of New France. In its view, it alone is qualified by heredity and training for leadership; the masses, in their place, are commendable and lovable, but their place is to accept the elite's leadership in all things. All those—the great majority—who lack classical college training are dismissed as *primaires,* no matter what their natural intelligence may be, or how far in life it may have carried them.

Quebec's unbalanced social structure is now undergoing profound changes; long-submerged portions of the iceberg are coming to the surface in the new age which has new values. Most of the recent developments which have attracted attention outside Quebec are products of the social dislocation brought by rapid urbanization or industrialization, and of a search for a new social order which has not yet been evolved. The French-Canadian, whose individualism is so great that he often talks in an alarmingly undemocratic way about the discipline, order, and leadership which other peoples quietly impose upon themselves, is beginning to turn against his traditional leaders, the clergy and the lawyer politicians, who used to act as middlemen between the masses of their people and the English-speaking economic and political overlords of this minority group. The day of the old family dynasties, when a constituency was handed down from generation to generation of the great family of the region, and relationship with notable personages was virtually a prerequisite to public life, is now fast drawing to a close; some of the most notable French-Canadian political leaders come from completely outside the old hereditary ruling caste, and are related to nobody of note. The clergy, whose membership is drawn largely from the masses, is not subject to the charge of hereditary conservatism in this more democratic age; but the majority of its members are subject to an institutional conservatism, arising from their economic isolation from the changing conditions of the life of the people. The French-Canadian has not yet chosen his new leaders, but it is likely that he will find them among the presently rare political and clerical leaders with a pronounced democratic outlook, and among the hitherto little-known scientists, technicians, and students of society who for some years past have been devoting their energies to working out a new social order, which will accept what the outside world has to offer to Quebec, and will incorporate it with the best of the French-Canadian tradition. This tradition, with its emphasis on a broad general culture, on certain human values, and on the spiritual rather than the materialistic side of life, has in turn something to offer to the English-speaking world.

The fundamental fact about Quebec today is that it is in transition. The war brought the full impact of the industrial revolution to a region which had long escaped that profoundly disturbing social process. Quebec has rapidly changed from a rural agricultural society to an urban industrialized one, and the process has been complicated by the fact that the industries which are altering the face of the province are invaders, owned and operated almost entirely by men who are cultural and sometimes political aliens.

The war also brought to bear upon Quebec the heritage of the French Revolution, whose influence in French Canada had not previously been great. After the fall of France a constant stream of French intellectual leaders passed through Quebec, cross-fertilizing its largely pre-1789 French tradition. Then the demand for books from France's overseas empire and from the more fortunate refugees made Montreal the center of the world trade in French books.

The war left French Canada more dependent upon itself and its culturally alien neighbors than ever before, since it was long cut off from both France and Rome; but this painful separation, with all its disadvantages for a minority group which sought cultural enhancement abroad, fostered Quebec's emergence from cultural colonialism and integrated it more fully into North American life.

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Another result of the war is the possibility of the meeting of French and English nationalisms on the common ground of Canadian nationalism. Canada's brilliant war effort, and her rise to a leading rôle among the smaller nations in general and particularly as bellwether of the British Commonwealth flock, has been accompanied by a tremendous development of Canadian national feeling. Most French-Canadians, for whom Canada—if often in the limited sense of Quebec—has always come first, despite their proclamation of their ties with France and Rome, are still unaware of the great growth of English-Canadian nationalism. This wartime development, with its emphasis on Canadian autonomy, makes possible a merging at last of the two nationalisms into that greater Canadianism for which Laurier stood. Most English-Canadians, on the other hand, are unaware of the sentiments of the French-Canadian masses, who in the fall of 1944 and the spring of 1945 flatly refused, for the first time in Canadian history, to form an ethnic party to meet an ethnic challenge.

They are unaware how much of the old self-centered isolationism of Quebec has crumbled with French-Canadian participation in world rather than merely provincial or at best national affairs. They neglect the influence of the federal government's radio and documentary films in large sections of Quebec which had previously been cut off from the outside world.

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Cut off from Europe, Quebec suddenly realized that there were other peoples of "Latin" stock on a continent which, beyond her limits, she had long thought of as exclusively "Anglo-Saxon." If at the outset Quebec's interest in the cultural unity of the "Latins" of the Americas seemed to be dominated solely by the thought that in such unity existed the means to resist the inroads of "Anglo-Saxon" culture, an unanticipated development was the discovery that the French-Canadians were more North American than "Latin" in the South American sense. The continental influence of press, radio, movies, sports, and the special factor of the two million Franco-Americans have Americanized Quebec more than some of its spokesmen are aware. But in any case the discovery of other national groups which might serve as cultural allies against the influence of the Colossus of the North has eased Quebec's chronic sense of insecurity.

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The major result of the war for French Canada, however, was the achievement of a freer and franker relationship between more English and French-Canadians than ever before. There are few Gallophobes among the English-Canadians who saw service overseas with the notably gallant French-Canadians, and those French-Canadians in turn find it impossible to believe that *"les Anglais"* are as bad as folk tradition paints them in Quebec. Both groups developed a common Canadianism of great strength, and these reactions of the veterans should be spread in time among the stay-at-homes, particularly in Quebec where family circles are incredibly far-flung, yet closely knit. A counterreaction may well come from the home-service men, the so-called "Zombies," who fulfilled the letter of the law by service in Canada but refused to volunteer for overseas, and as a result were browbeaten and insulted by their superior officers and the public for doing no more than was their legal duty. This sorespot may be eliminated in time, and in any case will be offset by popular pride in the wartime achievements of Canada. The better mutual understanding acquired by French and English intellectuals who tried to avert open ethnic clashes on the home front during the war, and who evolved a closer relationship between the two cultural worlds, can be spread among the rank and file of both origins with tolerance and good will. Today the great "Quebec problem" is to broaden the base of that mutual understanding, on a realistic rather than a diplomatic basis, and with mutual respect, for each group has something to give the other, and something to learn from the other. French and English will never be wholly one in Canada, but it seems probable that at least they may come to understand one another, and thus avert the recurrence of the crises here chronicled.

Vanishing Middle Class

J. L. BENVENISTI

THOSE WHO have been sufficiently interested to read these articles of mine may often have been struck by a curious discrepancy, a tendency at one and the same time to defend and to criticize what is now going on in Britain. This is not so illogical as it seems. I do most sincerely believe in and desire what I think people over here are really aiming at, which is a finer design in human relationships than the old capitalist order was able to provide. If I criticize, it is because I am sure that many Americans are socialists of this kind and are ardent with a similar desire, and I want to warn them by our example that good motives are not enough, that people may do much harm if, under the impulse of such motives, they try to remodel a complex social order with unskilled and insensitive hands.

The thing I have particularly in mind is a matter to which I made a brief allusion in a previous article, namely the effective, if unspectacular, ruin of the British professional class through taxation. This is a development of prime sociological importance on its own account, but the fact that it should be happening without occasioning any serious outcry or arousing widespread opposition save from a few of its more immediate victims, is a fact of almost greater significance, and one which justifies me, I think, in making this subject of middle class taxation the main theme of my article.

The essential story can be very briefly told by simply stating the tax payable on two British middle class incomes, which I have here translated into dollars and shown in tabular form:

TAXES PAID IN TERMS OF DOLLARS BY A BRITISH FAMILY

	Tax	
Income	*With no children*	*With two children*
$3,000	$752	$572
$4,000	$1,146	$966

These figures show that in the case both of salary earners and others the tax superadds a fresh and enormous burden to that already created by the rising cost of living, but in the case of the salary earner it has a further effect, for it actually penalizes any attempt that might otherwise be made to make his circumstances a little easier.

British employers are as disinclined as those of every other country to increase their costs if the chief result is merely to bring joy to the heart of the tax collector, and the very fact that forty-five percent of any increase in an employee's salary would be paid away in taxation makes them reluctant to grant the increase at all. The effect of

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taxation, therefore, at the present monstrous rates on the British salary earner is like that of a man who first pushes you into the mud and then rolls a heavy stone on top of you to prevent you from ever getting up again.

However, the salaried worker does not stand alone. Few, if any, members of the professional classes are able to recover their increased expenses from the public. Lawyers have increased their charges by one-eighth, doctors by perhaps a fifth, but in either case the rise in expenses has been many times this amount, and has left such people quite horribly impoverished. The result of all this is that the British middle class is being rapidly deprived not only of those slight amenities which are essential for the performance of intricate and responsible work, but also of all possibility, equally essential for first-class output, of maintaining its accepted standards of security.

This, however, is not quite the end of the matter. The American, heavily taxed as he may be (at least, by American standards), has some reasonable expectation of ultimate relief. The British, and in particular the British middle class, have hardly any at all. This is a plain matter of fact, for it is quite obvious from the Government's published program that immediately the armaments devil has been thrown out of the house, his place will be taken by seven other budgetary devils, who, even if they are not quite as voracious as the first, nevertheless make a tolerable showing beside him. They have the loveliest names, these others devils: Social Security, Improved Educational Opportunity, and our delightful friend whom I have so often described in these pages, Socialized Medicine—all great fellows, until you realize that they have fastened themselves round the windpipe of the productive and creative element in the community and are slowly strangling it to death.

Naturally, I write like this with a certain amount of hesitation. Nobody but a blackguard wants to deny people who are a little poorer than oneself—not so very much poorer, nowadays—the opportunity of a full and decent life. But if this can only be got by taxing the brains of the community to a point where they cannot work properly (and, incidentally, reducing its capital to vanishing point), it seems to me that you are only heading for national bankruptcy, and that it would pay everybody in the long run to put a brake on this kind of enthusiasm.

Unfortunately, that is not in the least likely to happen, because of the somewhat falsified perspective in which the great mass of the nation sees these things. There is a kind of unspoken assumption in people's minds that what has been going on for the past thirty or forty years is that the rising forces of Democracy have wrested more and more privileges out of the hands of the well-to-do, so that the amount of money that you are able to take out of somebody else's pocket has almost come to be regarded as the essential test of social progress.

Needless to say, it is a rotten test, and one that is completely irrelevant; for what has really been happening is that up to a point mid-way between the two wars the country has been growing steadily richer, hence there was always an economic basis for this kind of expropriation, and people who put their hands into other people's pockets were only taking a certain surplus that the original owners, no doubt with considerable disgruntlement, would as a matter of common decency have had to part with in any case. That was the real background of such reforms as Old Age Pensions, and the like. The fact that the process was almost always accompanied by a certain amount of fustian and party clatter—that being the way politicians earn their living—gave the impression that each of these acts of redistribution was a revolutionary triumph against the embattled forces of reaction, while as a matter of fact they were nothing but a sharing-out of a growing national dividend, which in one form or another was almost inevitable.

But the great mass of people were not told this. All that happened as far as they are concerned is that there has developed a kind of traditional ritual drama, of which this insertion of the hand into another person's pocket is the high-spot, a drama which the public has come to expect and in which it has grown to delight. And though the operative cause which kept the whole thing going, namely the relatively easy cumulative growth of our wealth, has disappeared, people still expect the show to go on.

It is, of course, perfectly true that while this squeezing process is becoming more and more difficult and socially dangerous, the objects for which it is supposed to be undertaken are becoming more and more desperately pressing. A great deal of our Social Security expenditure, for instance, concerns provision for the aged and for children. These arrangements have undoubtedly got to be made, because our changing age-distribution is going to produce a veritable army of old people who have just got to be taken care of somehow, and because children have become the most precious part of our wasting human capital. In other words, these things are necessary because we are in the middle of a first-class crisis.

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But people are not told that these are crisis measures. If that fact were recognized we might be given not only a more careful diagnosis of the malady, but a more scientific and complex remedy. But the fact is not recognized. Instead the ruin of the middle class is represented as part of a

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great equalizing process of social justice, and, as though that would finally eliminate any possible source of grievance, the middle class is not only, like everybody else, made a compulsory contributor to the Social Security system, but is, like everybody else, formally given the right to participate in its benefits. After that, it is implied, they cannot possibly have any kick coming.

So far, however, from making things better, this in reality makes them a great deal worse. For you cannot gear the creative worker into a state-run security system without in the end destroying him. Not only must such a system misinterpret and misunderstand the needs of such a man—needs which if unsatisfied incapacitate him quite as effectively as the lack of a square meal incapacitates a lumberjack—but it must, as a matter of sheer administrative practicability, pretend that the relation of this type of man to his work is something entirely different from what in reality it is.

I will give a very telling example of this. In strict law, everybody, including the so-called self-employed person, will be entitled in the event of sickness to a cash benefit of £2 a week ($8.00 in your money) and I am vaguely wondering just how anybody who could conceivably be called a creative worker will be affected by the following regulation, which will shortly come into force: "For the purpose of any provision of this Act relating to Unemployment or Sickness Benefit, a day shall not be treated in relation to any person as a day of incapacity for work unless on that day he is, or is deemed in accordance with the regulations to be, incapable of work by reason of some specific disease or bodily or mental disablement."

I have spent many happy hours trying to puzzle out just how this regulation would be interpreted in the case of, say, a writer. When exactly am I, myself, for instance, supposed to be "working," and when, unless I am actually suffering from double pneumonia or delirium tremens, am I supposed to be "incapable of work?" Any brother journalist knows that the really important part of such work as mine consists not in the act of writing or dictation, but in musing over drafts of articles, which I do in buses, in bed, and, particularly, in my bath, and which I am quite capable of doing (in fact, which I frequently continue to do,) with a temperature of 104.

Now, what is the Government going to do about that? Will it send a trained psychoanalyst round to me whenever I claim my $8.00, to find out what has been going on in my brain, and will I be disqualified if he comes to the conclusion that I have been thinking out an article for THE COMMONWEAL?

I have deliberately chosen the case of the writer not only because I happen to be especially familiar with it, but because it is the final reductio ad absurdum of the whole provision. Yet it is only slightly less absurd when applied to any business man or business executive, let alone to an inventor, a research worker or anybody of that kind. Such people, unless actually on the point of death, never completely let go of the reins.

The truth is that this provision is not meant to apply to people of this kind at all, and that it is made on the assumption that such people will never actually claim their $8.00 though technically they are eligible for the benefit. The pretense that they are afforded "security" by these enactments is nevertheless effective enough for them to be deprived of the means by which they can create their own security out of their own resources. It is, in a word, effective enough to destroy the condition under which alone professional people can do their work.

Now, whether this or that individual is taxed into professional sterility may not matter very much to anyone except to himself and his immediate dependents, but whether the creative and inventive class is deprived of the conditions under which it alone can function matters enormously, for they are the people upon whom the steady increment of the national wealth depends, and without that increment all redistributive schemes are about as much use as a sick headache. They are a mere rationing-out of poverty, and bring a perpetuation of poverty in their train.

Now, I say that politicians who do not resist such a trend with all their power are simply exploiters of economic illiteracy. It is no good grumbling about that, for this kind of thing is an inevitable feature of political democracy, the price of which is that men are necessarily forced into being politicians before they have the chance of becoming, intermittently, statesmen. I do not say the price is not worth paying, but we should not deceive ourselves about its magnitude, or pretend that what is going on in Britain is anything but a phase in a political game, played according to that game's accepted rules.

Seen from far off across the Atlantic the whole issue over here, I now realize, looks much simpler than it really is. The American tories damn us out of hand, and talk as though we were trying to make a kind of paradise for work-shy loafers. This is rubbish, but I sometimes think that the American left-wing sympathizers are even worse, and their ingenuous and undiscerning praise even more exasperating. It is for the benefit of the latter that I have written this article, and I have written it in the hope that if ever America travels along the road that we are travelling here in Britain, she may profit by our example and avoid coming, as we are likely to come before things get better, within a hair's-breath of national suicide.

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Arms versus Appeasement

Wallace's Siberia and Bullitt's Great Globe

Philip Burnham

HENRY WALLACE, in "Soviet Asia Mission," the report on his official mission of 1944 and his tract of the times, declares, "The enemies of peace are those who are deliberately trying to stir up trouble between the United States and Russia. . . . Before the blood of our boys is scarcely dry on the field of battle, these enemies of peace try to lay the foundation for World War III. These people must not succeed in their foul enterprise."

It would be a naïve and very straightforward reader of the daily news who thought that Secretary Wallace was referring in the above climax to Stalin or Molotov or any of the Soviet Marshals and Commissars who are making life so difficult for American men in power, and sleep so difficult for the rest of us. On the contrary, the reader can be pretty sure that Secretary Wallace refers to fellow Americans like William C. Bullitt, who has just published his "preface to world affairs," "The Great Globe Itself."

Ambassador Bullitt writes like one who would accept any accusation made by Secretary Wallace gladly, and would gladly counter with perhaps less rhetorical but more coldly bitter charges for Mr. Wallace to digest in his turn. There is little doubt that the Ambassador had in mind people much like the Secretary when he wrote: "Our hopeful wishes predisposed us to accept any laudatory lie and to discount every refractory fact. And all the agents of the Soviet Government in America, all the members of the Communist Party, and all the dupes who are 'fellow-travelers,' made hay with American public opinion while the Red Army fought heroically and the White House sun shone. . . . For this strange and bitter fruit of victory the people of the United States have to thank those who based American foreign policy on appeasement of Stalin . . . and those citizens of the United States who bamboozled the President into acting as if Stalin were a cross between Abraham Lincoln and Woodrow Wilson deserve a high place on an American roll of dishonor. . . . It was expedient from the point of view of domestic politics for our Government to pretend that the Soviet juggernaut was an amiable tank that would stop if the officials of our Department of State stood in the road and wagged their tails at it. The pretense was not in the interests of the American people or of world peace; but it was popular."

It is not exactly an amiable controversy which these two books develop. This is particularly dispiriting because both authors are unusually attractive men, each one a decidedly pleasant and persuasive leader of the opposite schools of thought concerning the right way to deal with Russia. Neither is a "reactionary"; neither a "red." Both achieved great fame as Roosevelt appointees, and presumably Roosevelt friends. The polar difference between their books comes not so much from argument over evidence cited, nor from opposition in working policy; it is based on guts.

While the Bullitt book clearly and almost recklessly sketches out a program for American governmental action toward Russia and the world, the Wallace book steers almost completely clear of definite and comprehensive suggestions.

"Good will," "friendship," and "collaboration" are asked for often and in many contexts, and it can be expected that neither Mr. Bullitt nor anyone else would be such a beast as to condemn that. Just what it means for a Government to perform good will, friendship and collaboration is, of course, another—or a real—question, and "Soviet Asia Mission" hardly touches upon that one.

"The keynote in all the messages conveyed to the Premier and peoples of the Soviet Union was that the wartime coalition would grow and strengthen in a concerted program for world peace. . . . In the second place [this from the "Seattle Speech," delivered upon return to America, July, 1944, and recorded in the book] we can and should fit our own way of life to cooperation with other nations and other peoples whose way of life is different from ours but who need our cooperation quite as much as we need theirs, and who are not only willing but eager to cooperate with us. . . . Friendship, like every human relationship, has to be cultivated constantly as a garden to keep it flourishing. . . ."

"Soviet Asia Mission" is—in gross effect, incidentally—a good travel book and an interesting geographic introduction to Siberia. The author shows he thinks a North Pacific age is coming on, and he impresses us that we must develop a "re-

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orientation in our traditional Atlantic-minded outlook." We should deal with Russia directly and by way of Bering Strait. There ought to be direct exchange of students, scientists, commodities, works of art, seeds of plants, breeds of animals, information, tourists and all the rest. There should be a joint "Polar Bear Airways" and every modern sort of direct communication via the northwest route. Alaska and Canada should be built up to furnish direct, vital contact with Siberia.

Mr. Wallace has especially interesting ideas about international commerce and other economic exchange. "When we dip deeply into the economic and scientific causes of these thirty years of terrible struggle we find the outstanding factor to be the unequal growth of industrialization and the consequent unequal growth of population and political power among nations." He thinks the "advanced" nations ought to work to even up the economies of the "backward" regions.

It can be argued that this viewpoint conflicts with Secretary Wallace's explicit rejection of "balance of power" international policy and his fervent reliance upon Big Power collaboration. This Big Power bias narrows down at one point, indeed, to this statement: "If the United States and the USSR demand the enforcement of peace, no nation in the world today will seriously dare to challenge them."

In the economic leveling-up process, Soviet Siberia, although it is shown to have shot ahead meteorically already, is to be pushed ever upward by American help. The effort, evidently, is to be continued in the spirit of lend-lease: for urbanization, capital goods expansion, war economy, the pattern freely and exclusively dictated by the Soviet Government . . . "a matter of security."

How China fits into the Wallace policy is harder to work out; it is less heartily and far less directly stated. Much is told through Owen Lattimore, a companion in the Wallace party whom the leader seems to endorse completely. First, the introduction accepts President Roosevelt's then secret understanding "with the Russians that they should have access to Dairen but that the Chinese should have Manchuria." The very complicated writing about Mongolia, Sinkiang and Central Asia seems to boil down to the projection of the idea that those vast areas and scattered peoples should be free game for who can win them—Russia doing very well indeed currently. But in general, Mr. Wallace leaves China policy dark: "I am convinced that China and the USSR will take the necessary steps to insure continuing peace and to promote cultural and commercial exchanges among the nations of the Pacific to the benefit of all. . . . To the Russians the term 'friendly' does not imply a desire for socialist governments but for governments that will work with Russia, not against her."

It should be noticed that Central Asia is a broad area: "Owen Lattimore had traveled through Central Asia before, and he felt it no exaggeration to say that conditions in Uzbekistan [of the Soviet Union] at present are far superior to those in near-by Iran." The Russian friends of the Wallace party gave this toast at a dinner after the return of the party from a side trip in China: "Owen Lattimore and John Carter Vincent, American experts on China, on whom rests great responsibility for China's future."

Ambassador Bullitt deals with the Pacific only in passing and as part of a whole. It comes under the Open Door Doctrine, one of the three principles which he feels sum up America's "vital interests." The others are the Monroe Doctrine and the Atlantic Doctrine. The last is a proposition "that control of the Atlantic coasts of Europe and Africa and the islands of the Atlantic, and the water gates to the Atlantic by any power which might become hostile to the United States would be dangerous to the peace and safety of the United States."

The Bullitt policy is all written in this challengingly flat manner, and aimed directly against the Soviet Union, which the former ambassador to that Union declares to be, by its nature, hostile. Mr. Bullitt calls for a repudiation of what he terms our Government's policy of appeasement, and presents the following 14 Points:

1. Support the UN as strongly as possible, while recognizing that the UN is not a security organization because the Soviet Union and the other permanent members of the Council, by exercise of their veto power, can prevent any action by the UN.
2. Give the people of the United States the facts. . . .
3. Cease in all official communications and utterances to describe the Soviet Union as a "peace loving democracy," and treat it for what it is in fact, a totalitarian dictatorship, whose aim is to conquer the world for Communism.
4. Furnish to the Congress of the United States the facts which prove that Soviet Imperialism can be prevented from extending its control over Europe, the Far East and the Near East, only if we are ready to join the other democracies in action now to prevent fresh Soviet aggressions—and that Stalin does not dare risk war with us.
5. Maintain the superiority of our air force, and increase production of the atomic bomb.
6. So long as the Soviet Government adheres to the Communist Creed of world conquest, do not give the Soviet Union the atomic bomb, or any economic or financial assistance that may enable it to hasten the day when it is able to manufacture the atomic bomb.
7. Assist the democracies economically and financially.
8. Develop and strengthen the Inter-American League, in accordance with the terms of the Act of Chapultepec.
9. Start conversations designed to lead to the creation of a European Federation of Democratic States, open to all States which are not puppets, and have democratic governments and enforce a Bill of Rights.
10. Start conversations with the other democracies of the world, designed to prepare within the framework of the UN united and immediate action in case of further Soviet aggression; and to produce eventually within the UN a

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Defense League of Democratic States, to include the Inter-American League, the British Empire, China and the European Federation.

11. Maintain steady and active opposition to the efforts of Soviet Imperialism to swallow Manchuria, North Korea, North China, Iran, Turkey and those states of Eastern and Central Europe and the Balkans which it now controls.

12. Treat the Soviet Union with the most scrupulous fairness, frankness and reciprocity, respecting its rights under international agreements, and insisting that it respects ours and those of the other democracies.

13. Give the peoples of the Soviet Union daily, in their own languages, the facts of world affairs, stressing the truth that we stand for their freedom, no less than for our own.

14. Act, and use our influence with the other democracies, to hasten the process of raising the dependent peoples we and they now control, to democracy and independence and association with a Defense League of Democratic States.

It is interesting that Secretary Wallace also writes, "The people of the United States should have been taught the truth about the Russian Revolution from the very start." The two men must observe the world with radically differing frames of thought and judgment, and also they must be looking at quite different parts and acts in the world.

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This is a quick list of some of the kinds of evidence and frames of criticism put forward by Ambassador Bullitt: His Appendix I lists a steady succession of violations by the Stalin Government of their treaties. He quotes the authority of President Roosevelt and, at even greater length, of Lenin and Stalin. He cites Russian actions since V-E. He goes into older Russian history, finding foundations for despotism and cruelty, an imperialism based on the Third Rome idea, a tradition of serfdom, a habit of de-civilizing conquered countries, the continual maintenance of a secret political police and terror since Ivan the Terrible (1544-1584). He calls (very modestly) upon his own experience. He displays the class structure of Soviet society, after D. J. Dallin, and displays by brief statistics the Russian communist system of exploitation. He shows the words and actions of official communist parties outside Russia. He brings to bear the traditions and morality of Western civilization through brief historical sketch as a criterion by which to judge what can be seen. He comes to the conclusion: "No vital interest of the peoples of the Soviet Union, who already hold a sixth of the land of the earth and have scarcely begun to populate it, lies behind the thrusts of the Soviet Imperialism. But the communist creed demands the installation throughout the earth of Communist dictatorship, and the Soviet Government uses the peoples of the Soviet Union as tools to achieve that aim."

All this is oddly irrelevant for the Wallace book. The latter hardly argues or writes at all about Russian history and the habits that history may have established. He does not go over the actions of the Soviet Government since its creation nor examine the stated aims of Marx, Lenin and Stalin. He never examines the working technique of Russian foreign policy, and, except for some aspects of its pioneering effort in the East, ignores its method of internal management. He never once inquires why the hopes which he describes as a national policy appear to be thus far universally cheated. Ambassador Bullitt's analysis skips very hurriedly over the evidence as though assuming the reader is a daily student of the papers, but Secretary Wallace's attitude appears to be built on assertion and seems to assume that one has never seen or read anything at all.

The most important capital difference may well lie in their completely contrary evaluations of "ideology." Bullitt, as already shown, considers the communist creed the decisive factor governing the Soviet Government. He explains why he thinks that creed necessitates the constant effort to achieve world rule. He shows that the Soviet Government has always in fact held to action entirely compatible with the creed. He demonstrates that Soviet action cannot be reconciled with any other motivation and policy. He explains the "interest" which the Soviet governmental leaders have vested in adherence to the creed. He shows the intimate relationship between communist policy and the customary policy of state in Russia's governmental history.

Wallace exhibits a personal ideology which speciously denies the importance and seriousness of any ideology. It is, in short, almost pure "liberalism" in the most vulgar philosophic terms. Neither Bullitt nor, to be very sure, Stalin is a liberal in this sense. A few citations from the innumerable possibilities presented by "Soviet Asia Mission" may highlight what is meant here.

The material problem of building up Siberia closely resembles America's historical pioneering problem. Siberia and North America's West and North are very similar in physical environment. This fact, which Wallace well and sympathetically demonstrates, leads the author to a number of conclusions. He finds the physical problem has molded men of similar type on both continents—similar, one infers, in all *really significant* ways. For instance, "I know that the farm people of the Middle West can understand them, so long as they do not get involved in ideological talk." It is further implied, or taken for granted, that because the physical problems are much the same, the two countries will conduct themselves in like manners.

Wallace, judging as Bullitt does that the Soviets have no "vital" physical interest in expansion and imperialism, concludes that the Soviets are therefore safe,tame and "peace loving." He does not credit their ideology with motivating vitality.

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A passage on religion demands quotation:

> . . . Of the Russians in the party Dimitri Chuvakhin was the most partisan Communist. At dinner one day in Irkutsk, John Carter Vincent needled him. "Which church," he asked Chuvakhin, "would you join if you belonged to any?"
>
> "The Roman Catholic."
>
> "You're the most religious man at the table," I remarked.
>
> "But it is not the same religion as yours," he said.
>
> "Now, I am willing to grant that your preferred religion is doing the world good," I continued. "Are you willing to do the same for ours?"
>
> "No," Chuvakhin said flatly.

There is a mechanical sort of interpretation of experience in the Wallace book, derived, perhaps, from accepting the physical form simply, without regard to the motivation and spirit and the whole picture—which would involve ideology. Siberia has gained fantastically in population in the past quarter century, "over 40,000,000 people have taken the place of the 7,000,000 . . . so the detractors of Russia must pause before the fact of Soviet Asia today." He never recognizes the question a reader may have in mind about how those people got there.

Secretary Wallace propounds utterly simplicist definitions. He never takes into account the party nature of the Soviet Government, so the "government" officials turn out to be simple opposite numbers of American mayors, governors, etc. The various divisions of the Soviet Union's structure are presented as fully meaning what the titles say, like "autonomous," "federal union," "republics," etc. He does not consider how ideology or party government may affect any of this.

A most wonderfully unanalytical passage concerns the NKVD. "In traveling through Siberia we were accompanied by 'old soldiers' with blue tops on their caps. Everybody treated them with great respect. They are members of the NKVD, which means the Peoples' Commissariat of Internal Affairs. I became very fond of their leader, Major Mikhail Cheremisenov, who had also been with the Willkie party." The NKVD is called later simply "the Soviet secret service," giving the summary impression that Wallace pretends the agents are just like the plain clothes men who protect the President.

With similar simplicity, "Stakhanovite is the title given the most efficient and productive workers . . ." That is just about all about the whole question of the Stakhanovite system and its meaning.

Clearly, the Russians assigned to the Wallace party did not have their guest's abhorrence of ideology. Several of their explanations of Trotskyism are recorded (as accepted); their religious and general economic conversations noted; their concern to discuss Russo-Chinese relations; and their whole effort to explain what was being seen. Secretary Wallace convinces the reader that he caught the explanations safely, but he does not prove that he has seen what was going on in a way to answer such men as Ambassador Bullitt, whose explanations are the opposite of those of the Soviet employees.

There is a foundation for the anti-ideology of Secretary Wallace, a foundation of ideology which he elaborates late in the book:

> Both the Russians and the Americans, in their different ways, are groping for a way of life that will enable the common man everywhere in the world to get the most good out of modern technology. There is nothing irreconcilable in our aims and purposes.

More positively still:

> . . . One will be the exponent of free-enterprise democracy, the other of directed democracy. One will lay its primary emphasis on the political freedoms, the other on the economic rights. Our two countries will inevitably affect each other. Russia already is granting her people more of the political freedoms. We in the United States are talking more and more about what President Roosevelt called the economic bill of rights. . . . But it does mean that the common man is in the saddle and that his desire for a job and maximum production widely shared without loss of freedom will have a profound effect on both nations and through them on the entire world. Our free-enterprise democracy is constantly changing, and the Soviet-guided democracy is changing, and the peace of the world demands that we have a friendly understanding of each other as we change.

This is the famous Wallace dictum, and it leads him to the position of champion for what Bullitt calls appeasement and Wallace calls friendship.

There is absolutely no resolution of the conflict in either of these two books. Secretary Wallace fails to suggest what the United States Government must do now that his hopes have all been shown false. He refuses to look at the actual content of communism, most importantly, its "ideology" (and most immediately, its threat to peace). His kind of "liberalism" fails to meet the problems of a serious international situation, just as such an attitude collapses before the serious problems which confront an individual person. The Wallace thesis is bankrupt and must be repudiated by the American Government and people. Mr. Bullitt propounds a policy to succeed it, clearly, and clearly a hard one to accept—but there are no to-the-point arguments against it in Mr. Wallace's book. It is a question of guts. Perhaps Mr. Wallace's best and most persuasive development would be away from the power actions of governments altogether. If he gave up his self-defeating philosophic liberalism, he would perhaps move toward personal pacifism, almost its dialectic opposite, being a most highly principled and intensely ideological position. This could not easily be advocated for the government of the United States, but a reader could cheer it honestly and welcome it as a constructive force in the lives of men of the US, the USSR and of all the other frailly United Nations.

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The Screen

Seething With

FILM MAKERS are doing their best these days to give our emotions a workout. In drama after drama, regardless of the wide variety of circumstances, characterizations and locales, the main concern is love, love, love.

Last year, in reviewing "They Dream of Home," Niven Busch's novel about soldiers' homecoming and adjustment, I said: "Although Busch stacks his cards and is more interested in exciting melodrama than a typical situation, he still manages to make us consider the problem more as a problem than a divertisement in fiction." *"Till the End of Time,"* the movie supposedly based on this novel, turns out to be a divertisement in romance. While giving some thought to returned veterans' disillusionment and difficulty in fitting into society, the movie concentrates on the love affair between an ex-Marine and a young war-widow still devoted to the memory of her late husband. "Concentrates" puts it mildly for the camera hovers around this couple as if they were the great American boy and girl whose every posture and emotion must be preserved in cinematography. The boy is played by Guy Madison, a newcomer whose beauty is emphasized in practically every foot of the film, but whose inability to act cannot be disguised when he is teamed with Dorothy McGuire, a fine actress whose skill comes through even when hampered by her own affectations. This romance, which starts with a love-at-first-sight episode, goes through many reels of yes and no, and ends happily—but still inexplicably—with the girl running across a spacious lawn into the waiting arms of the boy. Even though the returned-soldier themes are not stated as forcefully as in Busch's book, it is good that the movie calls attention to the fact that veterans are not entirely content with what they return to. The hero's unrest at home and work, the bitterness of his wounded buddies (Bill Williams portraying a legless ex-prizefighter, and Robert Mitchum as an ex-cowboy with a plate in his head) are attitudes we should be aware of. The film does not solve these problems (one does not expect it to), but it serves as an effective reminder that, though the war is won, many a soldier's battle is just beginning.

A long time ago, Somerset Maugham wrote an interesting novel about a medical student who not only was afflicted with a club foot, but was hopelessly ensnarled in the clutches of love. Warner Brothers has seen fit to re-film *"Of Human Bondage"*—a dangerous venture since the first version (1934) was so successful. The new movie, beautifully produced by Henry Blanke with excellent photography of the turn-of-the-century sets, and leisurely directed by Edmund Goulding, seems interminably long. This is mainly due to Paul Henreid's tedious portrayal of Philip Carey (a rôle formerly made sympathetic by Leslie Howard) who suffers and suffers after his love for an ill-mannered wench becomes an obsession. As Mildred Rodgers, a name that is by now almost a synonym for meanness and depravity, Eleanor Parker gives a good performance, but I suspect, without detracting from her ability (or the skill of Bette Davis) that the rôle is actor-proof. "Of Human Bondage" is most effective in Miss Parker's big scenes and when Edmund Gwenn (as Philip's jovial friend, Athelny) brightens the story. Newcomers to this long tale of woe had better stick around for the finale and Gwenn's concluding observation: "Accept the good in men and be patient with their faults."

It is indeed difficult to find the good in any of the characters in *"The Strange Love of Martha Ivers"*—one of the most sordid films to hit the screen in a long time. Its assets are all on the artistic side: Hall Wallis's fine production and the good cast expertly directed by Lewis Milestone who uses the camera to tell the story. But what a nasty story! After the 1928 prologue in which 13-year-old Martha kills her cruel aunt (Judith Anderson), we swing into the present and the main dish. Martha (Barbara Stanwyck), now married to the alcoholic D.A. (Kirk Douglas) who saw her kill the old lady, treats her husband with contempt. But they both fear Sam (Van Heflin) because they think he too saw the murder and has returned to blackmail them. Sam doesn't get wise to this till later; he's really hanging around because of his interest in a young girl (Lizabeth Scott) who is mixed up with the police. I'm not sure whether she deserved the prison sentence; but it probably doesn't matter. Everyone is so unhappy in the picture's miserable world, that perhaps the girl would be better off in prison than around Iverstown where adultery, murder and suicide are only a few of the misdemeanors committed. With first-rate performances, such as those of Heflin and Douglas, this film cannot be called dull. It is in fact rather exciting entertainment—albeit sensational and grim.

"A Scandal In Paris" is equally cynical about love and life, and seems to consider most standard brands of morality as a joke. Based on the memoirs of Eugene-Francois Vidocq, it traces the careers of this adventurer (George Sanders) through various crimes and love affairs in the early 1800's. Assuming a tongue-in-cheek attitude, the film thinks its blasé hero pretty cute. It not only contrasts two of his women: a worldly café entertainer (Carole Landis) and the inexperienced demure daughter (Signe Hasso) of the Minister of Police, but also parallels the polished Vidocq and his uncouth accomplice (Akim Tamiroff) with Saint George and the Dragon. Director Douglas Sirk struggled with the story and corny lines to give a picaresque effect, but one doesn't know whether to laugh with or at its situations and such attempts at sophistication as: "Sometimes the chains of matrimony are so heavy they have to be carried by three."

The English also have sent us a film that is strongly centered on love and matrimony; but *"They Were Sisters"* sees its characters so definitely from a woman's point of view that it is not easy for a man to review. Based on a novel by Dorothy Whipple and directed by Arthur Crabtree as if he had all the time in the world, this picture wanders from 1919 to 1937 as it tells what happened to three sisters. Lucy, the nicest, marries happily, but is unhappy because her only child died. Vera, the beauty, a selfish nymph, made a loveless marriage and is unfaithful. Charlotte falls hopelessly in love with a cad and

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is driven to drink by his sadism. All this is told with typical English understatement and good performances throughout. Particularly effective are Phyllis Calvert as Lucy and James Mason as the cruel husband whose psychopathic tendencies are carried several steps farther than in Mason's last picture shown in this country, "The Seventh Veil." I don't know how this slow but absorbing picture will take with American audiences who are not used to a rambling story with a moral about the advantages of the middle road and muddling through. However, audiences liking adult films in which even murder by cruelty is toned down might consider this subtle saga of the sisters.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

The Labor Movement

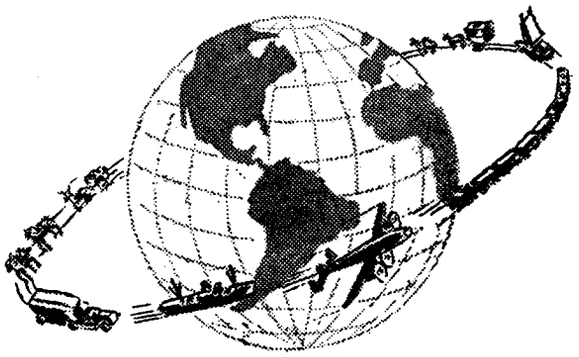
The Perversity of Mr. Krock

IT IS a beautiful thing to see—the calm, untroubled arrogance with which Arthur Krock can reel off the most awful nonsense in his column in the New York *Times*. On July 18, for example, Mr. Krock plays a few variations on one of his favorite themes, namely, that the upsurge of prices is mainly, if not exclusively, the fault of the labor unions, which greedily insisted on wage increases, knowing full well that these could only be paid out of higher prices. "The CIO, and Mr. Reuther as one of its chief spokesman," says Mr. Krock, "for a long time has taken the position that wages can be raised progressively without any commensurate increase in prices." Mr. Krock then goes on to show how this contention flies full "in the face of logic and facts."

Perhaps in his own mind Mr. Krock has made a good showing. But certainly not in the sober black and white of the Times editorial page. As you read the column you look in vain for logic and you grope in the dark for facts.

Here are a few facts, Mr. Krock. You may use them if you like. They are free as the air. According to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve Bank, savings in bank, war bonds and savings bonds increased from $40 billion in 1939 to $130 billion at the beginning of 1946. Did the workers and the greedy labor unions get all that lovely cabbage, Mr. Krock? No, they did not. Over 60 per cent of it, that, is, more than $78 billion, went to the richest 10 per cent. The poorest 40 per cent had about one per cent of the savings, or around $40 per family.

Don't you think those are interesting facts, Mr. Krock? And don't you think it is really a very simple exercise in "logic" to draw the obvious conclusion? Which is this: just exactly as the CIO and Walter Reuther have maintained, the profits of American employers have been so fat and luscious in recent years that in most cases they could very easily raise wage rates, to balance partially the cut in hours, without raising prices commensurately. It was not only possible to do so, but absolutely imperative to do so if we were to keep a large enough percentage of our money flowing into the hands of those people who spend it because they've got to spend it, rather than into the hands of those people who save it because they already have much more money than they will ever need. For only by so doing could we keep our economy running at anything like full production and full employment.



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The "logic" of this conclusion becomes even more crushing when we consider the further fact that Congress, at the beginning of 1946, repealed the excess profits tax, thereby making it even more painless to raise wages. And when we also ponder on the large sums of money that business has been saving through the introduction of improved machinery, then truly we begin to wonder how people like Mr. Krock can go on drawing a sizable salary from reputable papers like the *Times,* when they are capable of preaching such drivel and confusion.

When American business went on strike against labor's just demands — a much more accurate way of putting it than "when labor went on strike for higher wages" — then it became possible for business to show that it was losing money. Of course it was losing money. Did it expect to break the strikes and force Congress to pass some nice tough anti-labor laws, all without losing money? But let us suppose, however difficult it may be, that General Motors, the steel and coal operators, General Electric and all the others had signed without a fight the contracts that eventually were signed anyway. What would have happened? What would have happened is that many of them could have raised wages, *cut* prices and still made a nice piece of change.

But of course all this supposing is based on the assumption that most American employers were resigned to strong labor unions, high wages, low profit per unit, and a definition of "nice piece of change" that is somewhere within the bounds of reason and elementary justice. Let us pray with all our hearts and souls that some day, as soon as possible, this beautiful assumption will come true. Right now, unfortunately, the majority of American employers remain almost as perverse as Mr. Krock.

This and That

THE CIO reports election victories in 39 plants since the start of its drive to organize the South. These include the largest plant in Mississippi. It seems that those prophets who said that Southern workers would ride the CIO organizers out of town on a rail forgot to go through the formality of consulting the workers first . . .

At Yale anything is possible. We now find that Professor E. Wight Bakke, director of the Labor and Management Center at New Haven, has worked out a formula to reduce strikes. The formula is rich in sentences like: "In summary, the tensions and anxieties or hopes produced by a condition of unstable equilibrium or disequilibrium in the structure of living are the stimuli to adaptive behavior."

Professor Bakke may have a wonderful formula. But unless he can learn to speak English, his formula will die and be buried where it probably belongs anyway, in the Yale library. . . .

Joe Curran has won a round in his current fight with the Fosterites in the leadership of the National Maritime Union, CIO. Just barely. A handwriting expert decided that 64 ballots from Boston were marked by one man. These and 42 from Corpus Christi were thrown out, so Curran's candidate for treasurer was re-elected, 15,674 to 15,614 for the CP challenger. The CP's still have two vice-presidents and the secretary: anti-CP's the president, a vice-president and the treasurer.

Curran is certainly anti-CP as of today. But will he be anti-CP as of tomorrow? JOHN C. CORT

Books of the Week

Homeland. Georges Surdez. Doubleday. $2.75.

THE IMMIGRANTS came from everywhere but usually from some place where there was nothing to eat or where there was a pogrom, and it was usually the American tourists who thought that the places where the immigrants came from were beautiful. The better you got as an American tourist, the more difficult you got, the more exacting, the further you would go looking for places where immigrants came from and the more beautiful you would consider the palace in Naples, with ten families sleeping together in the basement (*i bassi*) and how like Greek statues were the women climbing the Calabrian hill to the village carrying the amphora filled with water (because there was no water in the village) or how noble were the men and women of Aran (you could be a tourist at the movies) breaking the rock, putting a bed of seaweed on top of the broken stones, scraping out dirt from the crevices in the rock, carrying the dirt in baskets, placing it on top of the seaweed, smoothing it into place with the hands, patiently building the soil in which to plant.

"And then men ask are barmaids chaste," or why do immigrants want to come to New York where all you need is some money and you will not be thirsty or hungry and there is the streetcar for a nickel, the subway, the ferry, and everything is in the shop window and all you need is to learn the language.

The books about my childhood in Yugoslavia, about my life as a little Jewish girl in Mariupol, about my life as a nice little Catholic boy the year herself could not find anything to put in the pot, describe cheerfully or not cheerfully, with nostalgia or without, a condition of strain from which the author has escaped.

Yet, of course, if many are driven, there are a few who choose—to come. Even the people who make our immigration laws, establishing the quotas, assume that those who want to leave a very nice country where there is neither famine nor pogrom must do so because they have the right spirit, the strong tall body, the names—Abercrombie, Brooks, Peterson, Fitch—that do not have to be changed and fixed to sound right in Vermont. And even when the names are strange it's all right if they come from a country that never had a famine or a pogrom.

These people, however, who come from a country they did not have to leave, rarely write books about their childhood, because in a happy country there are a great many people who stay at home, do not migrate to America, do not starve to death, grow up and become novelists. They write the books about childhood or at least they write books in which the first chapter is always about childhood, and we know all about adolescence in France, England, Switzerland, Sweden (when Germany was a nice country we knew all about adolescence in Germany) through the literatures of these happier countries. The immigrants write books to explain why they had to come here but there are all the books written abroad to explain why there are still so many people who have stayed where they were born, immigrating only from youth to old age and through love to death.

All this is to say that "Homeland" by Georges Surdez is a most unusual performance. Surdez is Swiss. No one, obviously, need ever leave Switzerland; it is hard to see

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why anyone should ever want to leave Switzerland yet the Swiss are always going all over the world. They go, as Americans once went West, in a spirit of adventure. They do not leave their country because they are starved out or persecuted; they leave because their country is so sure, so safe, because the vineyards are always there on the hills rising above the lakes, and above the vineyards the cattle are always there in the pasture lands—and in summer the cattle go up through the forests till they reach the high pastures just below the snow and the alps. They leave home because they are accustomed to freedom and there is no one to tell them that they may not go to see what the Mediterranean is like or the lands across the Atlantic. They are free to leave also because they can read and write, they know their trades, they can be trusted anywhere, they can find employment anywhere, like Gallatin arranging the United States Treasury, like Agassiz describing the United States—or they can build a Ritz Hotel. They can never be pitied in the lands to which they come; no book they could ever write would cause them to be pitied for having been born in their homeland.

So that Georges Surdez writing about his youth in the Bernese Jura, the departure of his family across the border into France and ultimately across the Atlantic to America, has to find reasons other than those of the usual European misery to explain why his people left home. He finds these reasons in one of the most fascinating descriptions of a family that I have read. This most extraordinary family is seen through the eyes of a small boy. The child is so exceptionally intelligent that it is natural that Georges Surdez should name him Arthur Gardoz; the father is so eccentric—to say the least—his adventures in work and in love so trying to his family, that it is natural that the author should proclaim his book to be a work of the imagination. It does not matter whether "Homeland" is a novel or an autobiography; it is constantly interesting, amusing, tender and vivid.

Mr. Surdez writes extremely good English; it is all the more unpleasant to have to say that there are hair-raising incursions of dated American slang ("Father was born a sucker for a dame.") unspeakably out of place in a book which is serious and beautiful. C. G. PAULDING.

Escape In Passion. Jules Romains. Translated by Gerard Hopkins. Knopf. $3.50.

WHILE no one should be condemned for biting off more than he can chew—since this is the impulse which keeps man going—it is sad to see so bold a plan as M. Jules Romains conceived in the series of books called "Men of Good Will" slowly petering out. For some time, as M. Romains's plan unfolded, its shapelessness, irrelevancies, and lack of cumulative force have been growing more apparent. Yet because of the interest he has managed to sustain in certain characters and the occasional flashes of brilliance which lit up the whole, the hope has somehow persisted that this chronicle of twentieth century France might yet achieve true significance.

By now, with this latest and next-to-last volume of the series, "Escape In Passion," which spans the year 1933 and foreshadows more clearly than before the catastrophe awaiting France, M. Romains should have gathered up the themes begun in earlier volumes and fused them for the final decisive climax. Yet in this volume again, as in "The Wind Is Rising" published last year, although the

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rumble of doom continues to sound intermittently, the author brings us no nearer to the center of the storm. Nor does he give greater stature to the two chief characters, Jerphanion and Jallez, both men of good will whom we have come to recognize as most closely identified with himself.

Jerphanion, it is true, wins the political authority for which he has all along been striving. He is chosen Minister for Foreign Affairs. But his term is short-lived, for the policies he must follow clash with his principles and he resigns. And his resignation, which might have been used by the author to point up unforgettably the contrast between good and evil in the nation's life, becomes, in the handling of it, little more than a personal disappointment.

Moreover, the accent of the book is not on Jerphanion, the man of action, but on his old friend Jallez, the sensitive intellectual of the early volumes, and here again disillusion awaits the reader. Already, in the last instalment, Jallez turned away from responsibility and abandoned himself to sexual day-dreaming. Now he plunges into what the author calls "escape in passion" as though mere titillation of the nerves were in itself a goal. No one who has grown fond of Jallez could fail to revolt at the stupid excesses into which M. Romains now throws him. When, toward the end of the book, as though suddenly aware that he was diminishing Jallez inexcusably, the author tries to restore at least the emotional dignity of his *alter ego* by hinting at the birth in Jallez of a true important love, its validity, after so much adolescent prurience, remains unconvincing.

There is, however, in this latest volume of "Men of Good Will," a technical development which should help to hold the interest of readers unfamiliar with the rest of the series. Whereas up to now, M. Romains has so hopped back and forth among his many unrelated characters and so frequently left them suspended that few of the volumes seemed like entities in themselves, in "Escape In Passion" he devotes several chapters at a time to the same personality and goes to some pains to interlock people who had no connection previously, thus giving the book a certain integration of its own.

But no single instalment of the series, with the exception of the high-pitched, intensely moving "Verdun" published some years ago, can be truly enjoyed, let alone judged, out of its context in the whole, and the whole, now so nearly completed, still has such a straggling form and so little emotional sweep in proportion to its scope that it is almost inescapable to conclude that the light which M. Romains was to have shed upon his times, already guttering, will fail.

VIRGILIA PETERSON.

The Old Country. Sholom Aleichem. Crown. $3.00.

THIS collection of twenty-seven stories, is put forth to give the general American reader some notion of the work of the Jewish humorist Soloman Rabinowitch, whose writings in Yiddish under the pen name of Sholom Aleichem (Yiddish for "Peace to you" or "How do you do") have most often been compared to those of Mark Twain. Soloman Rabinowich was born in a Ukrainian village about 1860 and died in New York in 1916. The stories in this book are centered in a village where conditions were so poor and miserable that life itself became ludicrous.

Some of the humor of these stories is bound to have seeped away in translation, and American readers who stand outside the tradition in which they were written will probably find Sholom Aleichem less satisfactory than Mark Twain. Yet, even when the humor is not intense and universal, the stories furnish a moment of relief from the depressing supply of psychological excursions we have learned to recognize as stories. Soloman Rabinowitch wrote from within a tradition that accepted life as a fairly definite kind of journey and believed that people were just about what they appeared to be. His stories about butchers, marriage brokers, widows, and tavern keepers reflect this certainty, and it is more accurate to call them tales rather than short stories. This collection has the additional value of reminding people who have no racial connection with ghettos and pogroms that there is much more to Jewish folk history than unusual monetary success.

JOHN BRODERICK.

Truths Men Live By. John A. O'Brien. Macmillan. $2.75.
Christianity. Joseph H. Fichter. Herder. $2.50.

IT WAS a happy circumstance that brought these two books simultaneously to hand. The one is the natural complement of the other. "Truths Men Live By," by Dr. John A. O'Brien, Notre Dame's professor of the Philosophy of Religion, is a popularly written, thoroughly readable exposition of the fundamentals of religious belief. A light-hearted guide takes the reader through the paths of reason to a knowledge of all that can be known of the supernatural by the unaided human intellect. The book's 419 pages cover God's existence, the necessity of religion, the existence and nature of the human soul, creation and evolution, the divinity of Christ. It is not, ostensibly, written as a text-book, but I shall be much surprised if it does not find its way into more than one college as a text in Christian apologetics. Father O'Brien has a deft and happy touch that gives new life to many an old argument. Occasionally his rhetorical flights strike a false note in a study of this kind, and the dialogues between various of his students and himself sometimes border on the coy. These however are minor defects in a volume that will be read with pleasure by anyone, Catholic or non-Catholic, above the high school level.

"Christianity," by the Jesuit Father Joseph H. Fichter takes up where "Truths Men Live By" leaves off. Subtitled, "An Outline of Dogmatic Theology for Laymen," it presupposes the fundamental truths treated by Father O'Brien. It is concerned with the great verities of faith—God, Man, Jesus Christ, the Church and the Sacraments—in the light of what God has chosen to reveal of Himself. "Christianity" is a contrast as well as a complement to "Truths Men Live By." Where Father O'Brien writes in the informal, at times breezy style of the publicist, Father Fichter is concise and academic. Passing from the first to the second book is like stepping from the college clubroom into the lecture hall. Which is not to say that "Christianity" makes dry reading. Here the well-instructed Catholic will find the answers to many of the doubts and difficulties of belief that bother anyone whose religious knowledge is extensive rather than deep. But it will require more than a little thought in the reading. One cannot but wish that "Christianity" had been fleshed out with more examples and illustrations. On the whole, the two books will provide an ideal course of reading for the educated Catholic who wants to enjoy the full richness of his own religious life, a richness that

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can be savored only through understanding. It will enable the same reader to pull his full weight also in the presently weak apostolate of the laity. For the truth-seeker of whatever belief, the evidences of Christianity are presented here about as well as any two volumes can do it.

LEO J. TRESE.

Valley Boy. Theodore Pratt. Duell. $2.50.

IF A LITTLE light reading is on your summer agenda, you could do much worse than choose this novel by Theodore Pratt. Written with a lively sense of humor that skids into broad comedy at times, the book is also embellished with some pregnant observations on child psychology and human behavior. Don't be misled by advertisements likening it to "Tom Sawyer" or "Huckleberry Finn." Its hero, 11-year-old Johnny Birch, has much in common with Tom, but Theodore Pratt is no Mark Twain.

While I have difficulty in believing that any parents (even fairly well educated) could be so completely without understanding as Johnny's, I suppose such thoughtless mothers and fathers do exist. Mr. and Mrs. Birch were raising Johnny by a book—which must be either a very stupid one or they didn't read it carefully. They insisted that their son call everyone, regardless of age, by his first name, that he speak Spanish and that he wear clothes more appropriate to the hero of a western movie than to an American boy. Johnny hated these affected cowboy clothes even more than he did the wacky house in which he lived. His parents copied it from a fallen-down Mexican hacienda, and its phony, pink adobe walls looked like a movie set that would be torn down any minute. But worse than Birch faddist notions about their clothes and house was their neglect of Johnny—an attitude which they thought would teach him independence, but which only sent the lonely, confused, love-starved child to strange companions. Instead of playing with children who laughed at his ridiculous clothes, Johnny daydreamed in the mythical kingdom of Yaggle or talked to the neighbors (adult) or romped with Oscar, the trained sea lion who lived across the street. This companionship between Johnny and Oscar provides the book's chief delights and most touching episodes.

The adults to whom Johnny went for diversion are as motley a group as have ever been gathered between the covers of a book. But since the locale is that "fey gash in the surface of the earth" known as San Fernando Valley, almost anything might be expected. Mr. Pratt has a healthy contempt for this community which was given by motion picture studios "a flavor of chaotic unreality, of colossal pretense, even of insincerity." He makes some pert points about the crackpots in Southern California and he spares no feelings in caricaturing the Birchs's neighbors on Florida Avenue, not the least screwy of whom are a Peeping Tom more interested in disturbing than peeping, and a widow trying to recover from the effects of being married to a movie star for 25 years.

Mr. Pratt doesn't quite realize all the possibilities of his themes as a study of children or as a satire of people whose very mode of living is a satire on more normal folk. And the book's ending is so contrived that one suspects the author got tired of this engaging child and his extraordinary playmates. Anyway Mr. Pratt has thought up many amusing incidents. After some editing (of dragged-in sex and awkward melodrama) "Valley Boy" would make a honey of a movie.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Yesterday and Today

No devotion in the Church is more beautiful nor so satisfying as the devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The fact that the Church has designated Our Lady in the Immaculate Conception as the patron of the United States testifies to the deep veneration that Catholics in America feel for the Mother of Christ. ROSES FOR MEXICO is a timely and beautiful account of one of the miraculous appearances of Our Lady. It tells of the appearance of Our Lady to a simple Mexican man kneeling in prayer on a barren rock and Her request that he tell the Bishop to build a church on the hilltop in Her honor. The natural scepticism of the Bishop and his demand for proof of the miraculous visitation are torn as under when the man returns with his coat filled with beautiful Castilian roses which Our Lady had caused to spring forth from the rock on the hilltop. The church was built and is known to millions of Catholics who have visited it as St. Mary of Guadalupe.

We all know of the tremendous interest in Our Lady of Lourdes and more recently Our Lady of Fatima. The visitation of Our Lady of Guadalupe preceded these visits by hundreds of years—in 1531. It is a cultus American Catholics can marvel at since it reveals the great interest of Our Lady in the Americas. It is small wonder that we look to her for the answers to so many of our prayers. She is truly the patron of our country. ROSES FOR MEXICO, by Ethel Cook Eliot. $1.75.

Another book which we have published and about which we are very keen: TRUTHS MEN LIVE BY, by John A. O'Brien. Father O'Brien teaches the Philosophy of Religion at the University of Notre Dame. Because of his teaching experience and research he is splendidly equipped to write on the subject he has chosen—the presentation of the truths which are fundamental to human existence. He delves into such questions as the existence of God, the afterlife, the authority of Jesus and of His revelation, the authenticity of the Bible and the relationship between all of these matters and the life led by the ordinary man.

The book has two fields of great interest. First, for the believing man it will reinforce, if that is necessary, his belief in God and Catholicism by demonstrating anew the validity of our religion. And secondly, a copy of this book placed in the hands of a real unbeliever would work wonders. For here is the problem of life attacked from the very angles from which the non-believer invariably launches his attack. By following the irresistible logic of Father O'Brien one will discover his conclusions to be diametrically opposed to the conclusions reached by the atheist, agnostic or scoffer. TRUTHS MEN LIVE BY, by John A. O'Brien. $2.75.

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No Better Land. Laban C. Smith. Macmillan. $2.75.

IT WOULD be nice to say that of American rural stories there is "no better novel" than Laban Smith's "No Better Land." Mr. Smith has tried hard to write of a genuine farm family living in Wisconsin a generation ago. He knows farm life well and so can confidently rely on typical farm incidents for action, avoiding the ludicrous and abnormal stuff that is the usual cheap way to sustain a novel about farmers. Nearly everything rings true: chores, seasonal work, weather, livestock, cutting wood, the little red schoolhouse, going to town, family talk and quarrels, accidents, hired men contemplating seduction, hired girls gossiping, sleigh rides, young love, conflict with neighbors. His Elliots are numerous and varied. At the center is Abel, blind and finishing out his life on the land he loves, still a canny and prosperous farmer. His wife, Marie, is a whirlwind of work and words. The eight children and the hired help move in and out of the action in plausible style. All the material is here for a fine novel.

Yet somehow the story is flat. Perhaps Mr. Smith is too faithful a reporter of externals. At any rate he shies away from any deep or sustaining theme. It might have been a novel of conflict of husband with a love of farming versus an ambitious wife who wanted town life and education for her children; Marie does want that but only in a nagging way, and she and Abel get on tolerably well. It might have been a story of the effects of a dominating mother and how her strength is her weakness; as her children defy her and strike out for themselves; they do it all right but neither Marie nor the children seem to care very much. Above all it might have been a novel of the cultural barrenness of post-pioneer farmers in the United States, for in his honesty Mr. Smith has written a depressing story; nobody is very bad, but there is little of perennial value shining in anyone or anything. However, the tragedy of that spiritual dryness is more in my mind than Mr. Smith's novel. His title is not meant as satire. Still, lots of stories of less quality are selling better and I'd favor anyone encouraging Laban Smith to do another novel by buying this one. EMERSON HYNES.

Paradise Hunters. W. Kane, S.J. Herder. $3.00.

THIS is a summary of Christian doctrine regarding the problems of human conduct. It is well written and organized, but its high level of generality makes it difficult to see who, exactly, would be helped by it.

CONTRIBUTORS

Mason WADE, author of "Margaret Fuller" and "Francis Parkman," has been visiting Canada on a Guggenheim Fellowship preparing several books on our Northern neighbors. This article is the concluding chapter of the forthcoming "The French Canadian Outlook." This volume is being published for general consumption; a more scholarly full-dress study is in preparation.

J. L. BENVENISTI is an English publicist and student of economics and sociology. Perhaps his best known work is "The Absent-Minded Revolution."

Virgilia PETERSON is a literary critic who contributes reviews to the book magazine section of the *Herald Tribune* as well as THE COMMONWEAL.

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